

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
SHROPSHIRE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN
NORTON FARM EXTENSION, CONDOVER**

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SHROPSHIRE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN
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1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Survey for this site shows that the following proportions of ALC grades are present:

Grade/Subgrade	ha	% of site
3a	5.7	55.9
3b	3.8	37.3
4	0.5	4.9
Other land Non Agricultural	0.2	1.9

- 1.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3a and Subgrade 3b are soil wetness. Some Subgrade 3a has a droughtiness limitation. Some Subgrade 3b and Grade 4 land has a gradient limitation.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in November 1995. An Agricultural Land Classification survey was undertaken according to the guidelines laid down in the "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of Agricultural Land" (MAFF 1988).
- 2.2 The 10.2 ha site is situated to the south east of Bayston Hill, about 2 kms from the edge of Shrewsbury. The site adjoins an existing quarry to the east. Part of the northern boundary is bordered by woodland and Bomere, the remainder of the site is surrounded by open countryside.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Shropshire Minerals Local Plan.
- 2.4 At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request this was a detailed grid survey at 1:10000 with a minimum auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The attached map is only accurate at the base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.
- 2.5 At the time of the survey most of the site was under cereals and grass ley. There was a small area of permanent grass on the northern edge, on and adjoining the steepest land.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 496 079) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	696
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1395

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	153
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	99
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	88

4 SITE

4.1 Three site factors of gradient, micro relief and flooding are considered when classifying land.

4.2 Gradient imposes limitations on the agricultural use of small areas of land towards the north end of the site.

5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The solid geology of the area is comprised of Carboniferous Keel Beds - British Geological Survey Sheet 152 Shrewsbury 1:63 360. This is overlain by glacial Boulder Clay.

5.2 The underlying geology (Boulder Clay) influences the soils which vary in texture from loamy medium sand over medium sand to medium clay loam over clay at shallow depth.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

- 6.1 Subgrade 3a - occupies 5.7 ha (55.9%) of the survey area and is found in two parts of the site.

In the south and in parts of the centre the soil has a medium clay loam topsoil texture, overlying clay loam or sandy clay loam with clay frequently occurring at depth. Observations of gleying and depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils into Wetness Class III. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

Most of the soil in the centre of the site is much sandier with topsoils of medium loamy sand or medium sandy loam occurring equally. The subsoils are comprised of loamy medium sand and in most cases medium sand at depth. The soils are relatively stoneless, and freely draining. The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land is droughtiness.

- 6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 3.8 ha (37.3%) of the survey area and is found mainly to the north east of the site adjoining the existing quarry. Two smaller areas of Subgrade 3b land occur in the centre and far north of the site.

The soil typically has a clay loam texture overlying clay to depth. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

The two smaller areas of Subgrade 3b land occur where gradients lie between 7° and 11°. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is gradient.

- 6.3 Grade 4 land occurs on the northern edge of the site where slopes exceed 11°. Gradient is the main limitation to the agricultural use of this land.
- 6.4 The small area (0.2 ha 1.9%) of non-agricultural land has been mapped in the centre of the site where there is a small pond.

6.5 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
3a	5.7	55.9	57.0
3b	3.8	37.3	38.0
4	0.5	4.9	5.0
Other land			
Non agricultural	0.2	1.9	
Totals	10.2	100.0	100.0